



RUTGERS REVIEW

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Cover by DAN FIG

Hey there boys & girls!
It's been a while, hasn't it? That gosh darn Spring Break really threw a wrench in our gears, but we're back and ready to go. For Spring Break, I spun a globe and headed out to Budapest to see what I could find. And ya know what? With all the drinking, public urination, graffiti and dog crap on the sidewalk, I felt like I was back in the ol' Hub City. Didn't go anywhere? Had a stay-cation? Just close your eyes, spin around a few times, and pretend the Raritan is the Danube and BAM: Budapest.
Now that we're back, though, the Review is super excited to bring you some mighty fine articles. I mean, come on, look at em all! Eric Weinstein finally explains what the hell all this Wards business really means, Merichelle Villapando talks to the nicest nympho you'll ever've known, Rob Gulya throws in his two cents on Watchmen (better late than never) and Keith E. Nagy takes a gander at internet-TV with Revision 3. Also check out Andrew Sheldon's one-on-one interview with ex-Weezer member/The Rentals front man Matt Sharp and our brand new investigative reporter Jon Borschadt's special report on the underbelly of another Rutgers publication. And if you haven't noticed, this is our first color issue in 2 years! Feel free to pull out Ryan Gutz's Robot-Dino poster and put it on your wall.
Only one more Review to go this year! Hope it doesn't make your eyes bleed!
-Dave Rothstadt (Editor in Chief)



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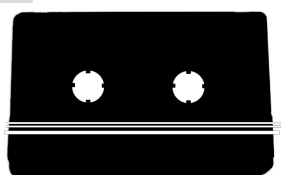
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WARDS

HOODS IN THE BRUNS

BY: ERIC WEINESTEIN

In the New Brunswick Council Chambers, someone has carved “FIGHT THE POWER” into the back of a bench. It’s a symbolic gesture, and who knows how long it has been there, but you remember it when you walk into EON’s office.

EON stands for “Empower Our Neighborhood.” It is an organization within New Brunswick that promotes greater governmental representation. It has reached out to the community in an effort to petition the establishment of a ward system within New Brunswick’s government.

EON’s co-campaign manager, Charlie Kratovil points to a giant war map of New Brunswick. “We knocked on the doors of all the streets that are highlighted,” he says. “We knocked on so many, that we stopped highlighting.” Nonetheless, almost every street is illuminated in yellow.

Wards are neighborhoods. For instance, the College Avenue campus and a majority of the student who live off-campus around College Avenue are within Ward 6. New Brunswick currently has five wards: Ward 1, Ward 2, Ward 4, Ward 5, and Ward 6. (These wards are not political however. They are used to report voter turnout and to handout parking permits.)

However, in elections, council candidates do not run within one ward, they run a campaign throughout the entire city. This means candidates run “at-large.” Running this kind of campaign is incredibly expensive, as candidates who do can afford to use television or radio ads.

“These are tactics that get votes, but don’t necessarily say, “Hi. I’m your neighbor,” says Kratovil. In essence, the candidate loses touch with their constituents. EON believes that the New Brunswick city council has done just that.

New Brunswick’s current council is made of five council members at-large. EON wants to change it to nine council members overall, with six elected by ward. Wards make elections about the communities and about the neighborhoods. Wards guarantee representation. As Kratovil says, voters are more likely to recognize the guy campaigning down the street and can see for themselves if that candidate is right for office

EON hopes that with a ward system, council members can be elected in a more honest democracy. To run a ward campaign would be at least 1/6 the price to pay under the at-large system. This would give smaller candidates a chance to run against the more affluent members of the current council

“We want to have competitive elections that matter,” says Kratovil. “We knock on doors and nobody knows whose on the city council and what is going on there. [The council] doesn’t know what is actually going on in the communities. They don’t knock on doors. They send out one glossy mailer.” EON hopes to change these invisible lines, fighting to bring the community together to help its common needs. New Brunswick is home to a diverse group of citizens, but for now they share one thing in common: they have a voice and a right to fair representation. They just need to be *heard* and *represented*.

Wards are a start.



WHAT A NICE NYMPHO

BY: MERICHELE VILLAPANDO

she says, genuinely communicating how her image is often misread. “Other girls don’t really take too well to it. They feel like I’m trying to get attention, but I don’t need to tell a guy I like that I want to have sex, to get attention from him.”

Her blunt honesty can be both a turn-off or a turn-on to those who talk to her. Ask her about her most recent sexual endeavor (like the one about a foreigner in a hotel) and she will probably tell you. This honesty comes at the cost of a good-girl image. You can be down with it or disgusted. Frankly, Mia does not give a fuck. She knows the truth: “I’m not going to sleep with just anyone. I’m very selective. If it’s not somebody I’m dating, I make sure we’re on the same page so that they know that it’s me having a good time and them having a good time. So they don’t think that they’re benefitting in any way.”

Maybe her sexual appetite is a little unusual. Maybe it’s her ability to consistently satiate the hunger that everyone feels, regardless of her situation. Maybe we’re all a little jealous. After all, as she says, “I’m doing it every minute that I can.”

pursuit of sexual immortality.

“It’s just such a good feeling to know that’s all we are—just a physical body. But when you can connect your physical body [to somebody else’s], it might be the closest I’ll ever come to feeling a higher power,” she explained.

How exactly does one get this way? When she was young, a little bit older than a toddler, she discovered porn.

“Playboy, Nightcalls 411! It was my initiation into sex. It was by these cute girls that were topless, and they’d be asking sexual questions or have sex on the phone. I was mesmerized by that. Any chance I’d get, I’d watch it, and it was hardcore porn.”

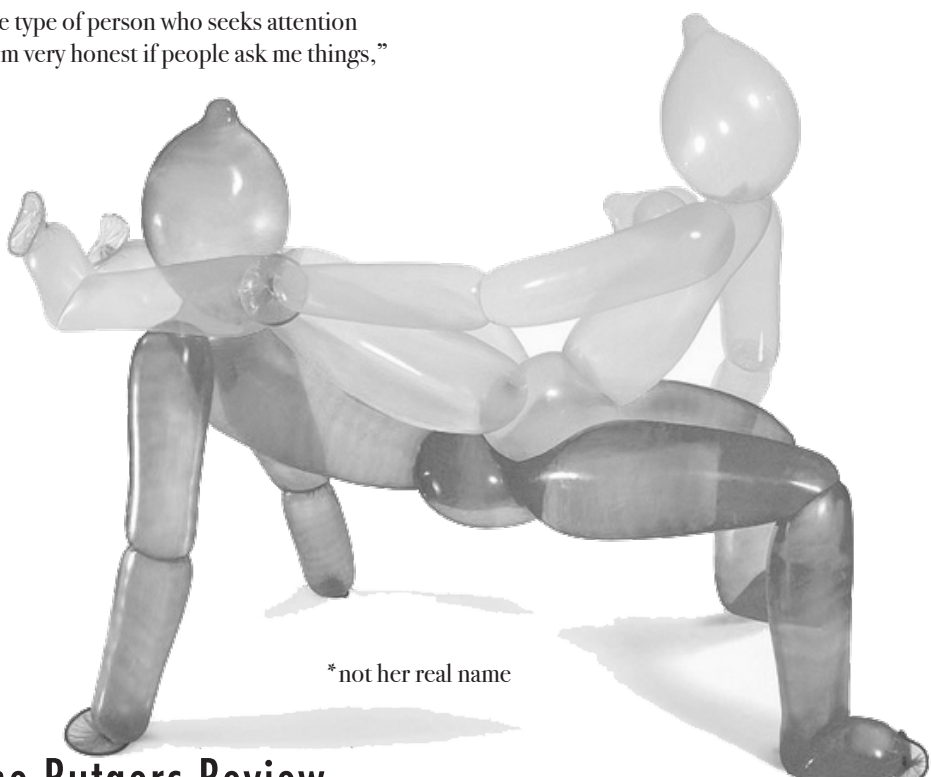
With her curiosity at its peak, she entered adolescence and lost her virginity to win a bet. The experience “sucked,” but “then we switched positions.” Now as an adult, she feels misunderstood all of the time.

“I’m not the type of person who seeks attention about it, but I’m very honest if people ask me things,”

Her voicemail says that Lindsay Lohan isn’t here right now. Confused, I redial the number and get the same message. She’s been referred to me by a number of sources who all say she would be perfect for the article. Mia* finally hits me back up. “You know why I’m calling, right?” I ask. Of course she does...

She’s only 20. Engaging in sex as often as meal times, it happens at least two to three times a day. Occasionally missing class or homework, she claims she’s not an addict: “I’d have to be masturbating 12 times a day to be an addict.” But even if she’s sick, she’ll be easily coaxed into doing the deed.

Meet Mia Markason, a modern day woman. She’s not amoral. She’s monogamous. She’s not just pretty—she’s a bombshell brunette. And when it comes to sex, she seems to transcend her body, separating the emotional from the physical. The result? Liberation. Now don’t get her twisted. Mia’s not a slut despite the fact that she’s had 12 partners to date. A more appropriate term would be “nympho”—one who has nymphomania, “an excessive sexual desire by a female.” The label “slut” implies a lack of morals. At the very least, this girl has standards and an impressive amount of control. More intriguingly, however, she is in constant



*not her real name

Slippin' Filipina Bakery

Breads
Cakes
&
Home
Revision

Story by: Merichelle Villapando

A black woman consults her friend on which polvoron to buy, while a group of high school students stand by the door and try to pick out whatever flavor ensaymada is left. I look at the empty chair next to me. Think of mom again. "[PHB] provides authentic food, contributes to the economy and shares Filipino culture," stated former Governor McGreevey during PBH's 25th Anniversary. And the customer? I provide authentic bites, contribute chismis and share fake Filipino culture during Sunday visits after church. Usually.

Lil Tyke and Big-T came with me once. Hungry, poor, and bored-the smells of fresh bread wafted doughy seductiveness to their tummies. "Tell us about each fluffy,

buttery bread," they drooled- like I was the expert, like I was the addict. Pan de sal, ensaymada, and bitsu bitsu- my recipe knowledge ended there. Ube was just "purple sticky stuff" and polvoron was "crumbly powder that tastes good on your tongue." I told them the cheese and sugar was surprising tasty. I told them "I got this" when the total rang up to \$3. I told them we'd get halo-halo after, but not here. They seemed to understand. They knew I was talking about Red Ribbon.

I wish I'd brought my mom. The old Filipina at the counter speaks fluently to the other cashieress in Tagalog. They look like my lolas. Finally, she pauses, turns, and twists, "Can I help you?" Absent of a smile, absent of the up and down rollercoaster of syllables and vowels that roll with the tongue and the accent. Her line is not well rehearsed. Her lips fail to pucker for me the way I wish they would.

Nervously, I describe that I'm reporting for a Rutgers publication. I omit the "Kamustaca, po?" cut to "Could I please have a moment of your time to conduct an interview?" My awkward words tumble over her ears and not into them. Click auto-mated response. She shakes her head shyly, "Sorry...I am busy. I can't help you." We let the void envelope us like cold, shivery hugs. I ignore it. Repeat my lines. Another cashieress recites the script. Same tone of guardedness. You can ask questions, but I won't answer. You can't ask them rightly. You deserve my wrong answers. Rewrite your script and maybe we'll talk.

At least we are professionals, feigning the truth. The lines snake from the restaurant area out into Newark Avenue. Trays of ensaymada empty from the afternoon's raid and baskets of bread-like goodies weigh down customers' elbows- due to piled high stacks of bread in plastic baskets- they are all so filling and familiar. A \$1.00 bag of nostalgic-filled bites. Inhale a bit of home, exhale a bit of strange. "Wake up and smell the hot pan-de-sal." Supposedly.

I shut up. I sit. I listen. Two older women, make chismis next to me. A page of the "Asian Journal: The Filipino-American Newspaper" is open. I try to peek at the words, but they blur into nonsense. To my right sit an interracial couple, a Filipina mother and her white husband with their two young boys impatiently waiting for their lechon. A young gay couple laugh by the mango cream cakes.

**"Inhale a bit of home,
exhale a bit of strange."**



Like,
Um,
Fuck.

By Erin Winterbottom
Contributing Writer

Like, sometimes? When people talk, they, um, don't always sound, like smart? You know? I mean, don't like, get me wrong, like whatever. Say what you're saying, I guess? Because like, who am I to like, judge? And um, you know. I mean, like, yeah.

The unnecessary question marks, the "you knows?" tagged at the end of every other sentence and the overused "likes" that pepper our vernacular have also destroyed it. When we write essays for class, we exclude the "likes" "ums" and "fucks." However, we tend to include them in our everyday conversation.

Just as Southerners speak with a drawl, New Jerseyans (especially young women) tend to up-talk. That is, everything? That they say? Is a question? Even though it's not? Sentences that end with a period are declarative, rather than interrogative. To refresh everyone's seventh grade grammar, interrogative sentences ask a question. Declarative sentences declare something.

The infectious up-talk that plagues our campus suggests that we no longer have any opinions of our own. Perhaps it is no longer socially acceptable to know what we're talking about, or perhaps we really don't know what we're talking about. Either way, the up-talk makes us sound unintelligent. Whether you are discussing the Chinese-Tibetan conflict and the implications of US involvement or the dangers of mixing plaid with print, if every other word ends in a question mark, someone's eye is likely to start twitching.

Another scourge of our daily glossary is the misused word "like." Like has been in our lexicon for more than half a century, even before Valley Girls and "Clueless" popularized its usage. For example, next time you watch old "Scooby Doo" episodes, notice Shaggy when he wants some like, Scooby snacks.

However — besides within similes — it is not a true part of speech. Neither an adjective nor a quantifier, phrases such as "he was like mad" and "she bought like ten shirts" do not make any linguistic sense.

"Um" is another non-word that escapes into even the most erudite discussion. Um, but we use it as um, a space filler. Ummmm. It comes in handy when we are searching for the next word. But didn't Jesus or someone say, "It is better to stay si-

lent and be thought a fool than to open your mouth and prove it?"

The F-bomb is another word we abuse when having trouble converting thoughts into conversation. Some of us may have memories of our mothers washing our mouths out with soap the first time we accidentally used this curse word at home. Searching for the right word is often difficult. However, I can assure you that eight times out of 10, "fuck" is not that word.

Unfortunately, there is a time and place regarding the appropriate usage of the F-word. Hanging out with friends? Fuck, why not? But if you are in class, at an interview or in front of children—bite your tongue or you will be subject once more to that bar of soap.

The issue at hand is that we are in college, presumably to receive an education that will prepare us to participate in society, via employment. Our diplomas will not mean anything if we do not know how to present ourselves in an interview or otherwise, with confidence and conviction.

S o m e - where along the lines of language trends, we fell into the black hole of "like," "um" and fuck. As students of Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, our vocabulary should be expansive enough to do without those three words.

Um, like, you know what I mean? Fuck.



Like has been in our lexicon for more than half a century, even before Valley Girls and "Clueless" popularized its usage.



Flock to the PARADE

By Danielle Rochford
Contributing Writer

Last weekend I had the pleasure of watching the musical *Parade* presented by the *Livingston Theatre Company*. The story is based on a real-life account of a Jewish man in 1914 named Leo Frank. He does not truly “fit in” with the southern townspeople, and he spends most of his time hard at work, much to the dismay of his wife. One night, he is shocked to find the police at his door, accusing him of the rape and murder of a young girl working in his factory. His condemnation by the media sparks



The *Parade* playbill

anger on behalf of the townspeople and faulty testimony in court. There are hints that the true culprit is the African American drifter that served as the key witness in the trial. The public outcry stemmed by the media leads the trial astray, drawing parallels to current times, where the accused can be found guilty without regard to evidence.

The acting is excellent, and several scenes really struck me. For example, during the trial, three factory girls sing a heartfelt song that turns everyone against Leo. These three actresses sustain a beautiful harmony that entranced me. Another scene, hit to perfection, is the show stealing blues number by the inmates in jail. I was left in awe by their talent. The lead character Leo is a difficult part to play

The acting is excellent, and several scenes really struck me.”

due to his multifaceted dimensions demanding a wide range of emotions. The actor, Matthew Magnusson, played him wonderfully, and I am very impressed by his versatility. Similarly, his wife, played by Christina Procaccini, conveyed her inner turmoil from the suffering of both her husband and the mother of the murdered girl. Together, Leo and his wife sing a wonderful duet during her final visit to him at jail. Another well acted character is the journalist, played by William Carey, who’s questionable morals and drunken antics are entertaining.

Parade is about the relationships we have with others, the freedom of speech, and justice. The show raises questions. Does the press have the right to print at will? At what length does one stick by a loved one’s side? Is the court of law capable of true fairness? Whether you love or hate the show, it was a very good production by the *Livingston Theatre Company*.

MORE THEATER AT RUTGERS!

With all the incredible (and not so incredible) offerings of the entertainment world slated for the upcoming months, it’s pretty easy to forget that there’s a whole lot going on right here in Rutgers!

During the rest of the semester, the three student-run theater groups on campus (the College Avenue Players, Cabaret Theatre, and the Livingston Theatre Company) all have plenty of fantastic shows coming your way. Not only are these performances incredibly well-done, they’re also all cheaper than a trip to the local Lowes! Hell, if you play your cards right, some of these may even be cheaper than a box of popcorn at the local Lowes.

Better still is the amazing selection of shows going on to choose from, ranging from musicals partly written by Adam Sandler or the South Park guys to plays about boning goats. Seriously!

The most important performance of April, however, comes during the final weekend of the month, when Wacky Hijinks (the best and only sketch comedy group on campus) performs *Off-Broadway!* Why is that the most important show going on? Because two of the cast members are on our editorial staff, that’s why! If any of the other shows want to complain, they can start their own magazines.

Here’s a run down of what’s going down...theater style:

College Ave Players

Cannibal! The Musical

April 3th, 4th, 10th and 11th

Scott Hall 135 at 8pm

Wacky Hijinks 2009

April 24th-25th The Players Theatre New York

May 1st-2nd in Scott Hall 135 at 8pm

Livingston Theatre Company

The Wedding Singer

April 9, 10 @ 8pm

April 11 2pm & 7 pm

At The Crossroads Theater

7 Livingston Ave.

New Brunswick, NJ 08901

Cabaret Theatre

The Goat, or Who is Sylvia?

Thurs April 2nd @8pm

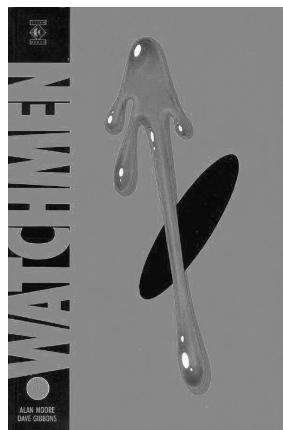
Fri April 3rd @8pm and 12am(Midnight Showing)

Sat April 4th @8pm

The Cocktail Hour

April 16, 17, 18, 23, 24, 25@ 8pm

April 19 @ 2pm



Watchmen: 23 Years in the Making

By Rob Gulya

Late in 1986, Alan Moore published the first volume of a 12-issue graphic novel miniseries that would both change the course of history for comic books and usher in a twenty

year upward climb to the screen. Hailed as being “the best of the breed” by *Time* magazine, the 13th best novel of the last 25 years by *Entertainment Weekly*, and winner of the 1988 Hugo Award given to the best works of science fiction or fantasy, Moore’s *Watchmen* would become one of the most celebrated, yet controversial graphic novels of all time. Because of its immediate commercial and critical success, *Watchmen* hardly went unnoticed by Hollywood production companies, and, in 1986, a man by the name of Lawrence Gordon bought the rights and set a plan in action to bring the novel to the screen. Now that plan is becoming a reality with the release of the much anticipated and long-awaited film twenty-three years in the making.

The first script for the film was finished in 1988 by Sam Hamm, and in 1991, Terry Gillian was hired by Gordon to direct. After perusing Hamm’s version, Gillian immediately ordered for the first re-write by Charles McKeown, creating a more faithful, full adaptation of the beloved novel. Gillian, in time, however would drop the film with frustration. Lacking proper funding, Gillian was the first to christen *Watchmen* as “unfilmable.” The rewrite of the script would sit

in production limbo for ten years until the turn of the century and, in 2001, Gordon took himself to Revolu-

tion Studios who were coming off a large commercial victory with *Hellboy*. In 2002, the second rewrite of the script would be completed by David Hayter

(which Moore would refer to as “as close as anyone could imagine to getting to *Watchmen*”) and the project was set to begin filming in Prague. However, disaster strikes again as Revolution Studios falls apart and production is once again abandoned.



Alex Tse to finish the project.

Warner Brothers did successfully fund the project, but not without the pitfalls that have



constantly plagued the journey since 1986. On Valentine’s Day in 2008, 20th Century Fox brought charges against Warner Brothers, claiming that they held the right to the film, or at least the rights to distribution through an agreement with Gordon in 1987. The projects doom seemed yet again eminent. Perhaps it is simply “unfilmable” as proclaimed both by original director Terry Gillian and creator Alan Moore. Litigations between Fox and Warner Brothers would drag on for ten long months as the film remained, yet again, in production purgatory. On Christmas Eve, Judge Gary Feess ruled in favor of 20th Century Fox’s claim to rights on the film.

Unlike their predecessors, however, Warner Brothers would not give up so easily. Gordon, determined to see his film finally come to fruition, pushed Warner Brothers to deal with Fox. A settlement would be reached on January 15, 2009, giving Fox ten million dollars and a 5-8.5% share of the worldwide profit. Warner Brothers, however, would hold all future rights to the film.

Now, twenty-three years after publication of the novel, *Watchmen* has finished the long, arduous, cursed journey to the screen. A journey plagued with production and artistic differences, the crumbling of two separate production companies, and the constant, ominous omen of it simply being “unfilmable.” Will Snyder be up to the task? Can Tse’s script overcome Moore’s proclamation that no script could be as faithful as Hayter’s abandoned in 2001? The moment of truth has finally arrived.



In 2004, Paramount Pictures picked up the accursed project. Acclaimed director of *Requiem for a Dream*, Darren Aronofsky was signed on to direct, but he soon be bogged down with other projects and was replaced by Paul Greengrass. Set for a 2006 release date, Greengrass got right to work on his film. Not so easy, Greengrass, in 2005, *Watchmen* was doomed as Paramount CEO Donald De Line pulls out, cutting short the funding behind the film. After nearly twenty years, four directors, three screenwriters and three failing production companies, Gordon would finally find a home. In 2005, Warner

Brothers took up the project and hired Zach Snyder, director of the visually enthralling *300*, and writer



Point/Counterpoint: *Watchmen*

Watchmen worth the wait?

By Rob Gulya

Over the past few years, we've seen the superhero grow from the static (and honestly quite boring) Batman of the 1990's to full-blown, dynamic, lively and controversial characters of Spiderman 2, Iron-Man, and, of course, *The Dark Knight*. Now here we are, early in the spring of 2009, greeted with *Watchmen*, the much anticipated film from director Zack Snyder (*300*) literally 23 years in the making. *Watchmen*, a book I have never read, is the most decorated and generally the best received comic book of all time, and, quite possibly, the most controversial.

What makes *Watchmen* so dark and touchy is that it is a superhero film that lacks any traditional superheroes. These are men with superpowers to some extent, Rorschach (Jackie Earl Haley), Sally Jupiter (Carla Gugino), and "The Nite Owl" (Patrick Wilson), all seem to have some kind of super strength allowing them to move very fast, endure harsh environments and punch really hard. Dr. Manhattan (Billy

Cudrup), however, is the only one possessing powers outside of the realm of physicality. He is not human, but, after a freak experimental mishap, exists on the quantum level, where particles can move around freely. Thus, Manhattan lives outside of time and space and can be in several places at once and do cool things like teleport and breathe in space. The plot revolves around the death of a retired superhero, The Comedian, and an attempt by the Watchmen to save a world on the brink of nuclear destruction. The plot details are relatively unimportant because a majority of the film is spent creating and defining the characters. We see their pasts, mostly through monologue and flashback (the most impressive and beautiful scene of the film is Dr. Manhattan's soliloquy that poignantly brings out the distance and apathy he feels in regard to the human race).

Watchmen is not an easy film to watch. It is bloody, violent and, at certain times, depressing. The

disturbed pasts of the characters are sometimes sickening, but are essential in coming to an understanding of their characters and their actions. *Watchmen* is beautifully filmed with state-of-the-art special effects that sparkle but aren't shoved in our faces. Are the characters as fun as Robert Downey Jr's Iron-Man? No. Are they as emotionally impactful and developed as The Joker and Batman in *The Dark Knight*? No. But *Watchmen* falls someplace in between, giving us developed, poignant characters with interesting storylines. The film, on a larger scale, however, begs certain questions as to the nature of the superhero and the morality of a cost-benefit approach to dealing with evil. *Watchmen* is worth seeing more than once, but will not have the passionate and heated discussions worthy of *The Dark Knight*.

Hurm, the *Watchmen*

By Keith Edward Nagy

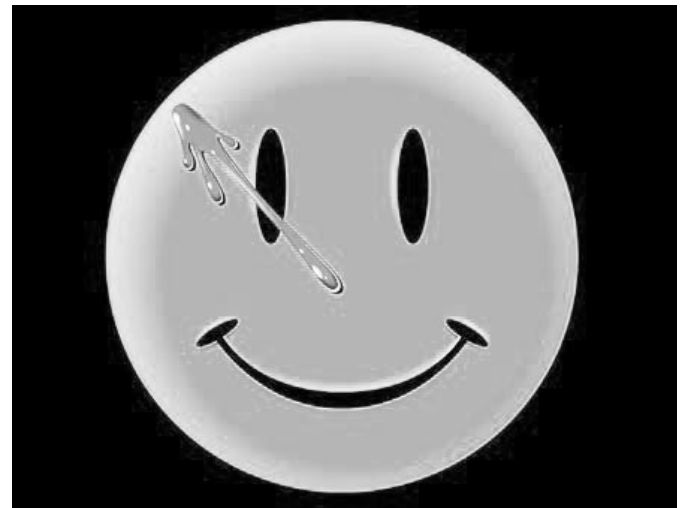
March 7, 2009. 9:28pm. I drive to the cinema with my friend to see *Watchmen*. I read the book the night before. Took me all night. I'm conflicted. Hurm.

March 8, 2009. 1:23pm. Suburban streets, trees line the road. "Tiny Dancer" plays on the radio. The window is down, the cold air blows over me. My mind swims with thoughts and ideas. Hard to pin any of them down. The announcer reminds me to push my clock one hour ahead. I think about time... Time. Experience. Sounds like a plan.

All moments in time that one partakes in are an experience. *Watchmen* plays with the notion of time and space, and attempting to pinpoint the feelings concerned with both the graphic novel and

the film is near impossible. What I can provide is a gateway into an experience that I had at 10pm March 7th, 2009.

There are some differences between the book and the movie plot wise but the movie stays very true to its source material. Zack Snyder does an excellent job of treating *Watchmen* with respect, and he often uses the same angles and direct dialogue that Alan Moore found fitting for the novel. Where the movie does appear to fall short, however, is the common problem of adaptations. The novel gives way to direct emotional and philosophical ideas, but the thoughts present in the movie seem to be lost in the background, subdued and, almost,



constrained. *Watchmen*, the graphic novel, is a deconstructionist story, that allows the reader to think about the question, if people dressed up as costumed vigilantes, what would make them do that, and how would the lifestyle of fighting crime affect them psychologically. The solution to not missing out on this is very simple, reading the novel ahead of time allowed me appreciate both the book and the movie on a deeper level. On a level that affected me personally. I fear that many movie goers will miss out on the ideas present in the film and the book. It is those ideas, however, that make *Watchmen* a masterpiece in ideological thought.

It is unfair to judge the movie too harshly. It delivers on many levels; it's fun, it's exciting, it's not afraid to make you smile and cringe. *Watchmen* as a movie is a very unique experience that only Zack Snyder can do. The movie and the book are experiences, the kind that stick with you. That is the mark of a truly great piece of work.



AN INSIDE LOOK AT REVISION3

By Keith Edward Nagy
Contributing Writer

Ever since the “Dot Com” boom of the late 1990’s, companies have tried to utilize the internet to aid growth. It would only be a matter of time until media outlets looked at the internet as a distribution service. *Revision3* Studios, based out of San Francisco, has shown over the past few years that it is possible, and lucrative, to create on-demand-direct-to-internet television. Far from the monotony of amateur made programming embodied by most YouTube videos, *Revision3* Studios attempted to create high production of half-hour and hour long videos covering geek culture presented in a professional manner. From

comic-book oriented *iFanboy* to the studios flagship show *Diggnation*, *Revision3* has grown to host numerous shows.

One of the founders of *Revision3* and *Diggnation* is co-host Kevin Rose, who you may recognize from his days as a show-host of *The Screen Savers* on TechTV and then *Attack of the Show* on G4. During his times on cable television, he experimented with the idea of having a video blog, *System*, in which he would create technological “hacks” from everyday items. After leaving G4 he decided to take his venture and expand it into a complete internet media outlet. He

soon founded the popular social news website Digg.com and then began to host the show *Diggnation* on the newly founded Revision3.com. *Diggnation* is primarily devoted to two regular geek guys, *Kevin* Rose and Alex Albrecht, discussing some of the weekly top stories on Digg.com.

The show was an instant success and helped pave the way for advertising space on the show and the eventual buying of a production facility in San Francisco devoted to creating direct to internet television. Some of the advertisers on Revision3 include Sony, Netflix, Dolby, Microsoft, and even HBO’s new



show *East Bound and Down*. Part of *Revision3's* goal is to release content through various means, using *iTunes* as a means of exposure and subscribing to podcasts as well utilizing file sharing services such as *Bit-torrent*, a peer to peer downloading service that does not use any direct hosting servers.

There are shows currently producing weekly episodes on *Revision3*. *PixelPerfect*, hosted by legendary Photoshop artist Bert Monroy, shows the audience certain techniques and tricks to get the most out of Photoshop. The show itself is very reminiscent of Bob Ross's *The Joy of Painting*. One of the full hour shows is *The Totally Rad Show*. *TRS*, as it is known, is hosted by Jeff Cannata, Dan Trachtenberg and Alex Albrecht, and is Albrecht's second show running on *Revision3*. *TRS* reviews recently released content from the major media industries of television, cinema, video games, and the occasional comic book. The show is highly entertaining from start to finish. Part of *Revision3's* distribution is to host every episode so that viewing past episodes of any of the shows is convenient.

One show that I watch religiously is *iFanboy*. The show is created by the three hosts, Ron Richards, Josh Flanagan and Conor Kilpatrick. *iFanboy* originally began as a website in 2000 that provided a review of weekly comics and collected issues known as "Trade paperbacks" or "Trades." Soon the website launched its podcast on *iTunes* and has become a big hit in the comic book world. As of 2009, *iFanboy* has

REVISION3 STUDIOS HAS PROVIDED A LANDMARK FOR THE FUTURE OF MEDIA DISTRIBUTION.

with Ron and I asked him how he feels about internet television and its niche market. "I think all TV is going to go niche eventually, as we learn to create and cater to what people want specifically. Look at cable TV, it's full of niche channels like SciFi and HCTV... I think over the next few years TV programming will get really micro and serve niches in ways never done before". Over the years, *iFanboy* has been able to interview some of the top people in the comic book industry such as Brian Michael Bendis (*Jinx*, *Daredevil*) and Robert Kirkman (*The Walking Dead*, *Invincible*).

One specific interview that was taped was with legendary comic creator Stan Lee. "It has definitely been a trip. Getting to meet Stan Lee was crazy enough, but to actually spend a morning with him and get him on our show? Mind blowing" Mr. Richards told me. On the future of internet television as an industry Richards explained that

111 episodes on *Revision3* and is still going strong. Ron Richards lived in New York for the majority of his time doing *iFanboy*, however, recently, he has moved out to San Francisco and joined *Revision3* as a permanent employee. He still hosts the show and releases new episodes every Wednesday. I was able to procure an interview

"Established businesses need to realize they need to embrace and encourage younger/tech savvy people or they're going to die, simple as that." I asked Ron Richards if internet televisi

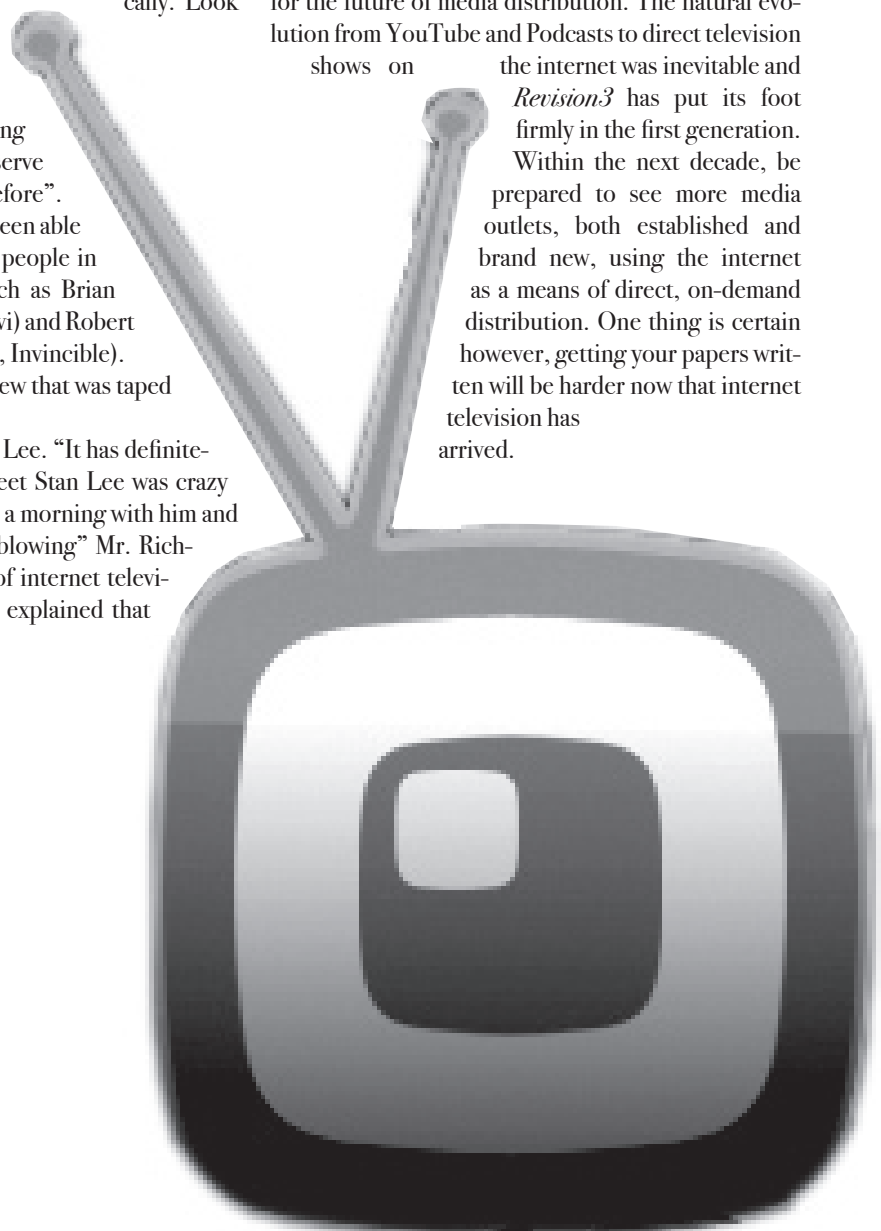
on was the future in its ability to distribute media, and he embraced Internet television as far as saying "I have a 46" LCD TV with no cable TV in my house, just an internet connection and an AppleTV running Boxee." Recent availability of high definition camcorders and digital camcorders have allowed nearly anyone to create a show, and the internet has provided the ultimate broadcasting technology. "The more people able to create content, the more chances there are to see something amazing, that under the old way of media doing things wouldn't have allowed for that to happen. I love that anyone can shoot, edit and make a show now and distribute it on Vimeo or YouTube or wherever."

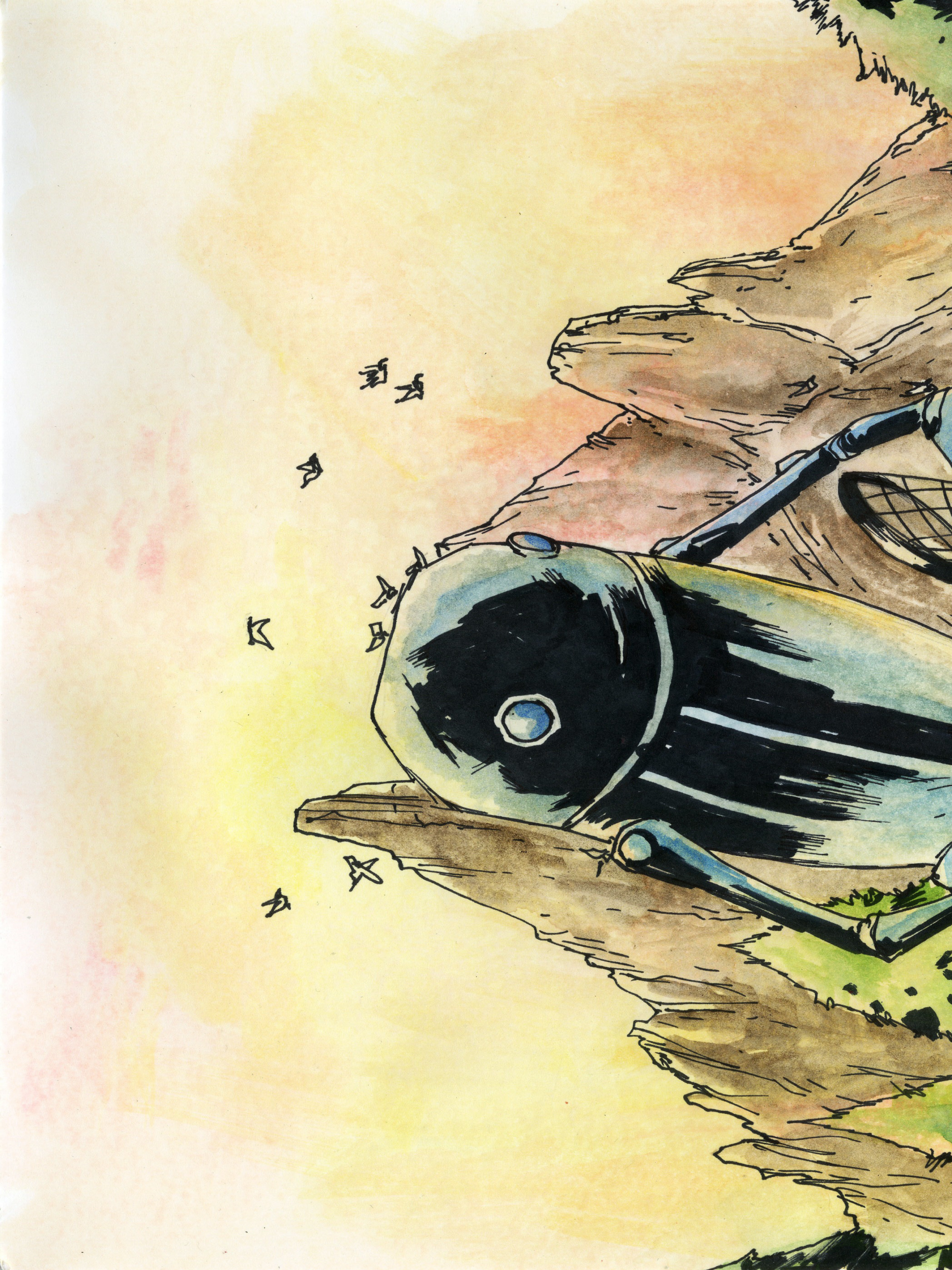
Revision3 Studios has provided a landmark for the future of media distribution. The natural evolution from YouTube and Podcasts to direct television shows on

the internet was inevitable and *Revision3* has put its foot firmly in the first generation. Within the next decade, be prepared to see more media outlets, both established and brand new, using the internet as a means of direct, on-demand distribution. One thing is certain however, getting your papers written will be harder now that internet television has arrived.



Creators of *iFanboy* and legendary comic book writer Stan Lee: Josh Flanagan (left), Conor Kilpatrick, Lee, Ron Richards.







Minorities lead the way

in real life and comics



By Dan Larkins
Contributing Writer

Spider-Man protected Barack Obama from the villain Chameleon on Inauguration day in the Marvel Universe, sending fans into a buying uproar and *Amazing Spider-Man* issue 583 into the comic record books. Obama is not the only minority figurehead of contemporary comic books, in fact, over the past few years, comic companies have developed or reintroduced a multitude of new characters including blacks, strong heterosexual and strong homosexual women.



Marvel Comics has recently given the black superhero Black Panther his own new series. Married to X-men matriarch and black woman, Storm, the Black Panther is the president of Wakanda, a generally peaceful African country wherein lies occasional ethnic violence serving to bring attention to real life strife in countries like Rwanda. As leader of Wakanda, Black Panther serves a social purpose for the real world—African countries can and should be led by their own democratically elected leaders (and inherent in this, that Africans are of course able to be actors in this process).

Blacks from the countless parallel universes of *DC Comics* were the heroes of *DC's* blockbuster storyline, *Final Crisis*. For the first time ever, *DC* writers incorporated new dimensions to the many universes of *DC*, dimensions where parallel Supermans could be black. This is part of *DC's* new mission to create stories reflecting their readership. The *DC's* new animated series *Batman: The Brave and the Bold* recently featured a crime-fighting team-up between superhero and martial arts expert Bronze Tiger and Batman.

Clearly, comic writers have been intending to incorporate a realistic amount of minorities into their books, but writers have allowed traditional backwards conceptions and unconscious racism to impact the characterization of blacks. The animalistic qualities of blacks in comics is no coincidence. This is a result of subconsciously conceiving blacks as simpler beings, close to Thomas Hobbes'

state of nature

Furthermore, in dealing with the trend to create new characters reflecting comic readership and the face of the population, comic writers are making out-of-the-closet lesbians superheroes for the first time.

Batwoman was originally introduced to quell fears of Batman having a thing for Robin. *DC* killed her off in the 70s, (actually, Bronze Tiger accidentally killed her), with fiery red hair, a skin-tight leather cat suit and knee-high red stiletto boots - complete with a blood red bat symbol on her ample chest - Batwoman, the alter ego of Kathy Kane, is set to make her re-debut on bookshelves this June in *Detective Comics* 854. Batwoman will return with a different but not defining new dimension. "We wanted to have a cast that is much more reflective of today's society and even today's fanbase," said *DC* editor Dan Didio. She will be extraordinarily important because Batman is currently dead or missing.

Arguably, the most awesome member of the Runaways, a band of superhuman teens who banded together for the force of good when they discovered their parents were part of an evil secret society, is the harnesser of solar power and lesbian Karolina Dean. *Runaways* is suitable for any audience, but the target audience is teenagers. While the media display of homosexuality is often contentious as it relates to teens, *Marvel* is taking a brave leap here. Meanwhile, *DC* is relying on the star power of Batwoman to keep readers interested in Batman's absence.



An evening with Butch Walker

by Andrew Sheldon

There's always been something a little tongue-in-cheek about Butch Walker. His resume alone contains a level of irony rivaled only by that poorly misguided Alanis Morissette song (the biggest irony being that the vast majority of the situations described in that song aren't actually ironic—they just suck). His musical debut was as the guitarist for the glam-metal outfit South Gang who began their careers with all of the commercial promise in the world, only to emerge just after Kurt Cobain appeared on "Headbangers Ball" in a bridesmaid dress, sufficiently f'ing in the "a" the (by that point) complete absurdity that had become "heavy metal." At the turn of the century, his band Marvelous 3 released *Ready, Sex, Go*, a self-proclaimed "cock rock" record, the poor commercial performance of which can only be attested to a lack of humor among listeners.

So, when he took off his red bandana and put on his songwriter hat, you can't help but chuckle to yourself. But that's okay, because Butch Walker is chuckling with you.

What allows him to pull off such death defying feats of irony is the flawless stage persona he has cultivated over his years at the helm. He's managed to mix the arrogance of cock rock front man David Lee Roth with the everyman qualities of Tom Petty. He's sort of who Springsteen would be, assuming Bruce Springsteen looked like your drug dealer.

The majority of songs played on this particular night (Mar. 20 at the Stone Pony) came from his latest release *Sycamore Meadows*, an autobiographical time capsule cataloging the loss of his recording studio to the California wildfires of 2007—an experience that appears to have humbled him. Usually shred-ready with an electric guitar and a half-stack, he's leaving the soloing to his guitar players on this tour while his attention is shifted towards an acoustic.

That is not to say the evening was without its surprises. One major unforeseen highlight of the show was a duet between Butch and Asbury Park-native Nicole Atkins: Three-quarters through the set, she came out on stage to sing with Butch on a cover of Elton John's "Tiny Dancer." After playing the first verse on an acoustic guitar, Butch pulled away from the microphone to announce with a certain level of satisfaction, "Oh, that's right. We're going to play the whole thing," sending the crowd into a thunderous uproar.

Near the show's end, he began to lament, "I want to come see you. I... I want to come out to see you," as he gathered all of the slack on his microphone chord he could wrap up in to his hands before slipping through the crowd faster than Chris Brown slipped through the legal system, to the bar at the back of the room, where he delivered the second verse to "Hot Girls in Good Moods," hanging himself from the piping on the recently raised Stone Pony roof.

It's this larger than life persona that explains his modest, yet extremely loyal fan-base. And how they love him.

Only after a few minutes of waving good-bye to his audience, he returned to the stage with a few quick quips that define Butch Walker cynicism. "I'm over the encore idea," he began. "How fucking egotistical is that? To have to have people cheer for you. Plus, it's too fucking cold outside."

He closed the encore with "When Canyons Ruled the World" off of 2004's *The Rise and Fall of Butch Walker and the Let's Go Out Tonites*, a piano driven ballad reminiscent of late '70s storyteller rock. At the song's conclusion, he got up from the piano to conduct his choir: The audience. From the stage, he garnered the crowd participation to recreate the track's gang vocals and counter melodies—one of the more intimate closers to a rock show—ending anti-climatically as he humbly and nonchalantly managed to thank the crowd with a simple wave and a sincere expression that seemed to communicate, "You're too kind."

It was refreshing to see Butch Walker in his own element. His true artistry is his performance, and with age, he's been able to perfect a balance between arrogance and a newfound level of humility that only make him a more relatable songwriter without hindering the energy of his performance. This type of maturation is certainly enough to make anyone wish he'd stop wasting his time producing hits for Lindsay Lohan, Avril Lavigne, Pink, and most recently Katy Perry, and get back to where he belongs: on a stage in front of his masses.

THE RENTALS: THERE'S NO "I" IN T.E.A.M.

By Andrew Sheldon

The Rentals' Matt Sharp discusses the creative process and their new project *Songs About Time*.

Geology is the study of pressure and time: Small forces operating over great periods of time can produce major structures. Talking to The Rentals' Matt Sharp you get the sense that maybe a person's creative output is shaped in the same way. On Jan. 1, the group launched a new Web site (therentals.com) entitled *Songs About Time*, a page centered on the band's newest project of the same name. The Web site chronicles the recording process through *Photographs About Days* and *Films About Weeks*, allowing the audience to watch the songs progress as the band discovers the chord progressions, melodies and keyboard tones of each track.

Most of the world was first exposed to Matt Sharp as the energetic bassist for the highly influential power-pop group Weezer. His falsetto harmonies and melodic bass-lines contributed a large portion of the band's personality. Subsequently, his departure in 1998 has since been a major topic of discussion by the band's long-time fans who notice the loss of Sharp the way an amputee feels a phantom limb.

But, if my conversation with Matt Sharp is any indicator, this is more than he'd want to hear about himself, at least as an individual.

"It's not a situation where it's one person, or even a small group of people. It's really a whole large group of people that are helping in so many ways that are involved with all of these different aspects of the whole *Songs About Time* idea," he says, discussing the origins of the new project. "It's just very multi-layered and there are so many great creative people that we know and talk to. And we were talking about some of the general ideas about how we're thinking about approaching things. And then just from having these great conversations, you would walk away going, 'Now I'm thinking about it in a slightly different way.'"

The emphasis on community in The Rentals becomes increasingly palpable when you look at their previous releases and their constant evolution throughout their 14-year life-span. While Weezer frontman Rivers Cuomo took a leave of absence from the group to attend

Harvard University and undergo corrective surgery for the difference in height of his legs, Sharp continued to play music, releasing the first Rentals record *Return of the Rentals* in 1995.

Critically acclaimed for wearing the influence of new wave acts of the late '70s on their sleeves (*Pitchfork's* Ryan Schreiber even praised their revival of Moog synthesizers!), allmusic.com defines the record as, "a real benchmark of care-free pop from the '90s and shouldn't be forgotten anytime soon." Despite its critical acceptance, *Return...* still faced the stigma of being a Weezer side-project. Despite the irresistible hooks and fuzzy guitar tones, the biggest similarity between *Return...* and Weezer's *Blue Album* is Wilson's meat-and-potatoes based ethos behind his minimalist drum-set — a style lost with the addition of Kevin March on their sophomore effort.

After officially removing himself from the Weezer-machine in 1998, Sharp relocated to Barcelona, Spain and began to focus on what would become The Rental's follow-up — the undersold and terribly underappreciated *Seven More Minutes*.

"I know at that time, I was trying to do something that had such a sense of celebration of that place; that captured that thing. I don't know

“It's really a whole large group of people that are helping in so many ways.”

if I was close or not close or anything. On all of these albums I always have this feeling after the fact that the images somehow conveyed more of what I wanted to convey than the music did.

"And that has a lot to do with why *Songs About Time* is so centered around the photography and around the films. Because, I know in the end it just might be possible that it's those things that we might get right. Or that the feeling we're trying to convey might be better conveyed through that."

As part of the *Songs About Time* project, the band has pledged to post a new photograph for every day on the calendar in 2009, and every Tuesday, a new film – shot and edited throughout the week – is featured.

"The thing that's most personal for me, about the whole experience of *Songs About Time*, is that we do what we're telling people we're going to do. That when you come to the site on Tuesdays, there will be a new film, and when you go to the photo-diary, there will be a new photograph every day. And, every day, I'm shooting a roll of

I'm not trying to credit anybody here with creating a new genre of music (but, if I had to pick a name, I would call it... "meta-music"), but this notion has about as many layers as a Charlie Kaufman screenplay, and is what distinguishes the *Songs About Time* project from most other musical releases. The record, released in three "chapters" throughout the year (the first to be released on April 7), works along with the supplementary material, as a primary source of the evolution of the songs about time over time. And then the 365 most enthusiastic fans get a piece of that process; a frame of time encapsulated in a roll of film.

And what triggered the most personal aspect of this project? "The idea about these 365 rolls of film. That idea was Jamie Blake's. And I told her about that desire to connect with our audience in a really personalized way. I wanted to do something where it really was more of a thing that just happens between two people. And it was her idea to do that, and I really thought that did something the was just very interesting to me."

But like Mr. Sharp said, "It's not just one person or a small group of people."

"The Filmmakers and the photographers and the musicians that are involved and all of the people that are working on this... We don't exactly know where we're going, and we're discovering it together. And, essentially with

our audience," he emphasizes before adding, "We're figuring it out as they're figuring it out," with a laugh.

It's this approach which makes *Songs*

About Time a perfect synecdoche for the affect of external pressures on one's creative output over time: Everything that happens in the studio is a potential influence over the creative process.

"That is one of the great things about *Songs About Time* is the fact that the filmmakers influence what we're doing musically. And that comes full-circle very quickly where the music influences the films, the films influence the music. Even the photography is influencing both the films and the music and they all sort of run concurrently.

"A friend of mine – when he first came to the site – he came to me and said, 'Well, I don't get it. It doesn't even look like a music site. It looks like a film site.' And that it looks like a photography site, and all of these different things.

"And, well..." he finishes, pausing introspectively, "That's kind of the point."

“Just from having these great conversations, you would walk away going ‘Now I’m thinking about it in a slightly different way.’”

35mm film and we're storing those rolls of film away, so when the limited edition version of this project is released, those first 365 people that have supported us, we're sending them one of these rolls of film."





Gil Mantera's Party Dream DREAMSCAPE

by Sean New

Consisting of brothers Ultimate Donny (guitar and vocals) and Gil Mantera (bass, synths and vocoder vocals) of Youngstown, Ohio, Gil Mantera's Party Dream has contributed to the resurgence of underground dance-pop/new wave along with similar artists MGMT, Chromeo, and MSTRKRFT.

The Party Dream's career started at a Youngstown bar when a band failed to show and the brothers took the stage for an impromptu performance. Armed with only a pre-programmed keyboard and extravagant outfits, the brothers put on the type of eccentric performance that crowds remember forever.

What began as a joke turned into a full time band. The duo started playing shows, trucking back and forth between the Youngstown and Columbus, Ohio scenes in 2000, sharing stages with a variety of bands of different genres. They have collaborated and often played with Grand Buffet (of Pittsburgh, Pa.), An Albatross, GWAR and Art Brut. Most notably, they

were invited to play New York City with The Rapture.

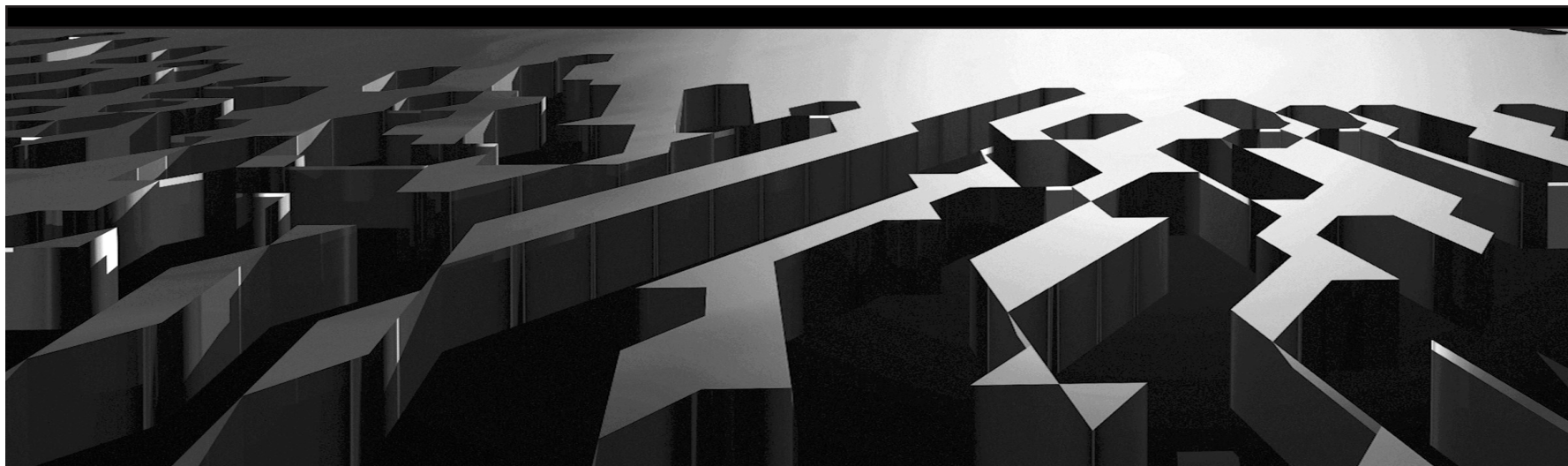
In 2004, the band self-released the album *Once Triangular*, a perfect way for longtime fans to introduce friends to the band's comedic rock style. In 2006, The Party Dream released *Bloodsongs*. Further expanding their fan base and distribution, the band gave listeners 10 tracks of electronic joy. *Bloodsongs* standout tracks include "Emotion Road" and "Elmo's Wish."

Recently, The Party Dream released *Dreamscape*, which contains similar formulas from the past two records with the addition of new drummer A.E. Paterra. This time, the band appears more in control of their music, having produced and funded the record by themselves, and they have succeeded in creating a more organic sound through the occasional use of live drums.

The opening track, "Dreamscape," clocking in at 7:11, reels the listener in with its incredibly catchy refrain and the arrangement of the introduction. While most electronica songs don't adhere to orthodox A-B song structure, this particular tune panders to both approaches of arrangement, especially when the refrain

kicks in as late as 2:30 into the song — changing the "dreamscape" from prototypical electronica to melodic reverie. After this novelty wears off, The Party Dream manages to keep you entertained through the careful arrangement of multi-layered synths, building to a fulfilling conclusion.

The first single, "Waking Vision," is driven with enough bubbly synthesizers and driving beats to induce a musical schizophrenia. Fans of early '80s new wave acts such as New Order will find familiarity in the guitar lead, while fans of bands such as The Cure will find solace in the melancholic vocal melody. Devo leaves its mark by underlying Paterra's driving and precise rhythms that carry the song as though it were a b-side from Devo's *Freedom of Choice* era. "Waking Vision" is available for free on their MySpace page at www.myspace.com/partydream. The rest of the album is not nearly as available. Being a self-release, it is currently only available online for download at www.pureuphonic.com.





THE REVIEW REVIEWS:

THE DECEMBERISTS

The Hazards of Love

by Dave Rothstadt

So, I was going to write this review all hoity toity-like, talking about how every decision in someone's life leads to the next, building upon each one until some sort of success blahblahblah, but I decided to toss all the prose and hyperboles out the window and give it to you straight.

The Decemberists new album, *The Hazards of Love*, is awesome and here's why:

First off, the album—the Portland group's fifth proper release, second on major label EMI—is a rock opera. Each track adds another piece to the story of Margaret and William—a peasant girl and a shape-shifter respectfully—who fight against a tyrannical forest queen of a mother, a horny child-murderer and a wild river, to keep their love alive a.k.a. *The Hazards of Love*. Frontman Collin Meloy originally penned the tunes with the intention of the collection being performed as a stage musical, but decided to stick to his guns and release the epic tale as a recorded album. During the process, he not only retained his trademark lyricism and open-mindedness toward style, but also successfully translated the intensity of a live, orchestrated performance.

While a rock opera is a good way for groups to show off their creative chops, problems do arise when trying to find "single-worthy" tracks within an album, pretty much consisting of one continuous song, broken into many parts. Even classic rock operas like The Who's *Tommy* only have two or three tracks that could easily play on the radio, although if anyone tried to pin down the lyrics for "Pinball Wizard" or "I'm Free" without considering the overall story, they wouldn't make a lick of sense. This point is not as much a detriment as it is a warning: this is not an album for halfhearted skimming. Styles and voices shift drastically halfway through tracks, such as from harpsichord ditties, to full out sludge-rock riffs ("The Wanting Comes in Waves / Repaid"), as a part of the Decemberists' plea for an attentive and invested audience.

I feel like I'm getting too long winded with this, so how about we plow through the next points:

- The album is chock full of styles, most surprisingly the amount of classic rock/metal electric guitars, which the band has only tried out before in full force on their previous album *The Crane Wife*.
- Meloy's lyrics are wonderful and confounding, sending listeners to their dictionary and Wikipedia for a better understanding of what the hell he's talking about. Maybe they'll learn a thing or two while they're there.
- While the frontman has never sounded more confident in his vocals, it is a strange joy to hear Decemberists lyrics coming from female throats, with the two lovely ladies from two diamond-based bands (Lavender Diamond's Becky Stark and My Brightest Diamond's Shara Worden) beating the Meloy at his own game.

The Hazards of Love displays a fearless band at the top of their game. They have sharpened their tools over the years and have a full understanding of how to use them. They have not just created a collection of tracks to be played randomly on an iPod, but a full experience worth sitting down and listening all the way through.

MUSIC

Music Potluck

Let's face it. There's a lot of music out there. Even music you may have loved at one point has fallen by the wayside, hiding in the vast expanses of your iTunes library, biding its time in anticipation of a Mickey Rourke level comeback.

Below is a short list of music by bands you may or may not remember, or maybe even heard at all.

Oh, and because we're so kind, we've also listed the best ways to find them.

Nirvana - "Seasons in the Sun" (video)

Originally found on the fourth disc – a bonus DVD compilation – of the popular box set as a music video, this cover of an old 70's pop song has made its way to YouTube.

Built to Spill - "Keep it Like a Secret" (album)

Last month, we ran a piece about Clarity reaching the ten-year benchmark. I can't believe we forgot this one. Sincerest apologies to Doug Martsch.

Lisa Hannigan - "Sea Sew" (album)

Long-time sad bastards may recognize Lisa Hannigan's voice from as the backing vocals on Damien Rice's records, but she's just released her debut solo record, and it's awesome. Currently available at her website (lisahannigan.ie), the vinyl pressing will be released on April 7 and is completely worth purchasing for the original artwork (the cover, liner-notes, and lyrics were all sewn by Hannigan, herself).

Dr. Dre ft. Snoop Dogg - "Deez Nuuuts" (song)

All it takes is the brief phone conversation between Snoop and (presumably) one of his (many) squeezes to make you wonder why you don't set your iPod's alarm to The Chronic for every morning. Classic.

Archers of Loaf - "Web in Front" (song)

A relatively unsuccessful group financially, this song (one of my favorites of the nineties) is probably easiest attained on the soundtrack for Kevin Smith's *Mallrats*, but is also the first track on their debut album – 1993's *Icky Mettle*.



A COUPLE OF WEEKS AGO,

RUTGERS' SATIRICAL MAINSTAY THE MEDIUM WROTE A BLISTERING CRITIQUE OF OUR LITTLE RAG IN AN ARTICLE ENTITLED "THE RUTGERS REVIEW WILL MAKE YOUR EYES BLEED" WRITTEN BY ONE OF THEIR TOP WRITERS, HOLDEN KOX. FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO MISSED IT, IT BEGINS WITH THE LINES "AM I THE ONLY ONE WHO REALIZES HOW MUCH OF AN UTTER PIECE OF SHIT THE RUTGERS REVIEW [SIC] IS? I CAN'T EVEN COME CLOSE TO DESCRIBING HOW MUCH FUCKIN [SIC] DICK THIS SHIT SUCKS..." AND CONTINUES FOR NINE

BRILLIANTLY WORDED SENTENCES OF HARSH (BUT FAIR) DENIGRATION.

WHAT MAKES THE ARTICLE SO FUNNY (BESIDES THE OBVIOUS WIT AND INGENIOUS TURNS OF PHRASE) IS THE FACT THAT I, A HUMBLE WRITER FOR THE RUTGERS REVIEW, WAS IN THE ROOM AS IT WAS BEING WRITTEN. FOR YOU SEE, DEAR READER, I SPENT AN ENTIRE WEEK AMONGST THESE STALWARTS OF SATIRE, THESE WIZARDS OF WIT, THESE VISIONARIES OF THE WRITTEN VOICE. THIS IS MY STORY. THIS IS...

Medium Like Me

By Jon Borschadt

It all started about a month ago when we, as an editorial staff, realized that we had gradually fallen behind the cultural milieu set by our peers at other publications on campus. Our quality was slipping while that of our rivals was marching ever upward. To paraphrase the esteemed Mr. Kox, our shit was very much beginning to suck dick.

We were most envious of the brilliance that was coming out of The Medium. Week in and week out they produced cutting edge material that we could only dream about. We felt like they were using the words that were on the tips of our tongues before we could even taste them. Once we flipped through the February 11th issue and caught sight of the amazing article, "Salmonella's True Victim: Ball-Licking Dogs", we knew something must be done.

The plan was simple: one of our writers would infiltrate the staff room of The Medium for a week and learn their secrets. It took an entire meeting to choose which of us would be the lucky one. Fortunately for me, I hadn't showered in a few days so it was decided that I would fit in the best.

I was more excited than I had ever been in my entire life.

The day of my first meeting, I spent hours choosing what to wear. I had to look like I was one of them, but not like I was trying too hard. My choices were down to a shirt featuring a picture of Peter Griffin from Family Guy dressed like Han Solo and another one sporting a choice quote from the latest Dane Cook album. In the end, I just went with a dark red T-shirt with black text asking, simply, "Who farted?" It must have been the right choice because they accepted me into their group almost immediately.

Although their staff occupies the same meeting room as ours, it felt transformed by their presence. The keyboards seemed to sparkle with the glitter of



infinite possibilities and the air was filled with the intoxicating mist of their jovial merriment. Plus, one dude had brought his Wii over so everyone could play “Brawl”.

They seemed thrilled by my presence. One editor remarked that I was their first new writer in over four months. This surprised me. With material so fresh and different in every issue, you’d think that they had a constant rotation of varied contributors vying for print space. Knowing that it was the same people every week just heightened my respect for the group.

After the initiation ceremony was over and I had washed the blood and orange Cheeto dust from my hands, we were ready to begin work on the latest issue. Or so I thought. You see, I quickly discovered that The Medium doesn’t write their paper like most normal publications. While they do meet routinely during the week to hang out and watch BSG, they don’t get around to the actual writing process until mere hours before the papers are sent to the printer.

How foolish I felt at that moment. Here I was, having already spent two whole days preparing for this article, and they were churning out masterworks like Jeremy Sam’s piece “WTF Poker? On TV? This Sucks!” in under five minutes. I was a sap in the presence of geniuses.

Finally the day came for us to actually begin work on what was to be the February 25th edition of the paper. I had a few article ideas in my notebook but I was too intimidated to share them with the staff. What if my meager suggestions like “Make the paper look more like a newspaper since it’s supposed to be a parody of newspapers” were deemed insufficient or “gay” by the veterans? I chose to keep my mouth shut.

For a while, everyone sat around in silence, until someone blurted out an article headline. His idea, “Shut Up, Lesbian Dyke in My Econ Class!” was classic Medium. Everyone had a good laugh although, in the end, the idea-man couldn’t come up with anything other than the title and the article was scrapped.

I realized quickly that I needed to say something if I wanted to be truly accepted by my peers. So I took a deep breath, raised my hand, and spoke.

“Isn’t the phrase ‘lesbian dyke’ redundant?”

Suddenly the room went silent. I could feel all the eyes in the room on me. All six of them. Was my mistake irreparable? Had I been found out already?

“Although their staff occupies the same meeting room as ours, it felt transformed by their presence.”

Luckily, the gods must have been with me that day because one of the writers stole the attention from my faux pas with an idea for an “Arts” section drawing. The image (which can be seen in the finished issue, directly facing the Rutgers Review critique) was to feature Phil and Lil, the adorable twins from the children’s series, Rugrats, engaging in incestuous sex while their friend

Chuckie watches.

The mere premise stopped me cold. It was so wrong yet, in its very wrongness, so right. The brilliant cultural reference. The character expectations turned on their head. Everything about it was comedy at its very best.

After the group had congratulated the artist, who goes by Russian Mail Order Bride (in this article,

“It was so wrong yet, in its very wrongness, so right.”

I will respect the anonymity he uses for his work by referring to him only by his pen name), the conversation turned to whether or not Lil should be drawn with pubic hair. The worry was that, without it, the character might look too young which would go against the large breasts she was to have. In the end, however, the hair remained off the final drawing as none of the staff had ever seen a real woman’s vagina up close and could therefore not authentically capture the look.

After the drawing was done, I thought about pointing out that the artist had placed the word bubbles out of order (the one to be read first was on the right of the drawing) so that only a reader versed in Hebrew would get the joke. However, I didn’t want a repeat of the “lesbian dyke” debacle and kept silent.

Once the rest of the articles were written, the material still fell way short of the space requirements. I began to panic but the rest of the staff knew exactly what they were doing. They jumped on their computer and began to read the Medium e-mail account so as to fill the last quarter (two of the usual eight pages) of the issue with another great “reader shout out” section.

A lesser man would criticize the paper for doing this, citing the section as “lazy” or “unreadable”, but I know better. There’s a lot of hard work that goes into putting together the “Personals” part of each issue. For instance, one e-mailed comment used the word “n***er” three times, which made a few members of the staff uncomfortable. They all looked to

the editor-in-chief for guidance, and he sat in silence, stroking his beard and sipping his Red Bull for a solid minute before imparting his decree.

“Edit it so that they only say ‘n***er’... twice,” he said. Everyone nodded solemnly at his sage advice.

After the reader comments were added in and

the rest of the blank space was filled with multiple notes yelling at people to come to writer’s meetings, the en-

tire work was handed to the design team. The design team consisted of a guy in a diaper named Randy who, up until this point, had been sitting in the corner, furiously masturbating.

Randy was like a master at a loom. With a few quick keystrokes on the computer, he had woven all of our crazy ideas into a beautiful tapestry, like the ones you see every Wednesday in your student centers.

You can’t imagine the pride I felt at that moment and throughout the rest of the week. I had contributed to something beautiful. Those wonderful creatures on The Medium editorial staff had accepted me as one of their own and allowed me to partake in a magical ritual that few people will ever be able to witness. And I will never forget my experience and the things I learned there.

However, the joy I felt while looking at those glorious stacks of papers, was matched by an equally great sense of sadness. For I knew that once that issue was printed, I would have to leave behind my new friends and also my new pen name, Holden Penis. I would have to return to the dank and depressing world of the Rutgers Review, complete with its rules and regulations and spell check.

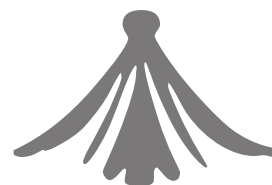
I was still depressed a week later, when I sat down in class and flipped open The Medium’s next issue. I couldn’t help but smile. There, in the “Arts” section, Russian Mail Order Bride had completed another masterpiece. This one featured Scooby Doo and Shaggy having bestial sex while their friend Velma watched. Those guys still knew how to bring the comedy!

A few minutes later, as my professor droned on, I began to absentmindedly doodle in my notebook. Without even realizing it, I drew a drawing of Doug Funnie getting a blow job from his love interest, Pati Mayonnaise. The girl sitting next to me in class looked over and saw it.

“Eww!” she shrieked. “That’s disgusting!”

“No, it’s not,” I said. “It’s funny.”

It’s funny.





SHORT FICTION

Dear Editor

By Jean_Pierre Mestanza

He feels light-headed and looks down, noticing the bits of glass pasted with blood to his arm. Shoeless, he jumps off his desk and breathes heavily. The Seventh Level awaits, he thought. The one explained by Dante. The dimensions he can't even see will soon open up for him, and his pain, depression and life will stop. This obviously wasn't his normal dosage of a normal drug. And a half hour into it, it wouldn't be long until he saw some crazy shit.

He gets a pen out of his pocket and begins to write.

Dear Editor,

My name is Breslin and people tend to believe me when I say that I am happy. It's what I should say, after all, 37 percent of the world lives in poverty while I make nearly \$920,000 a year. My house is a blow job done right in six bedrooms, two baths, and a great basement featuring the latest and greatest in computer and video game technology. I have my beautiful wife, former Miss America from New Jersey, Rutgers grad, and (most importantly) Jets fanatic. My son Mitch is a recent Princeton grad with a job on Capitol Hill.

I am at a crossroads in my life that requires me to question what I truly love and who I am. Am I really my 401K, my NASDAQ nesting stock, the big screen TV in my living room right now? I wish there was a solution to it all, and would never have to see my perfect little hot tub with the 31 different types of incense; the steam choking in the smoke.

Needless to say I am not happy. My life is a sham with a tail and needs to be put to sleep.

It barks louder but I can't pull the trigger.

The drugs don't help as much as they used to, but my "pharmacist" still comes by every two weeks with the package. I've had to up my routine. Maybe that's why I killed a man today.

He was in the car with his laptop when I spotted him. I knew who he was, so I ran over to him, but I had trouble remembering the password I was supposed to tell him. I choked.

The man rolled down his window and asked who won the 1943 Nobel Peace Prize in Medicine. I drew a blank as he repeated the question. Just normal operating procedure, the same we worked on months ago.

He told me to calm down with my routine, and start enjoying the life I have chosen for myself. He gave me the package and I went back into my office in the top floor. This is.....\$#@^&bdkjhb...

He picks up his cigarette and blows a smoke ring. Sweaty with anxiety and delirious with confusion, he grabs the pen once again and begins to write.

Dear Editor,

My best friend is in need of a serious attitude adjustment. He has a perfect life but can't seem to enjoy it. He constantly speaks of achieving a "Seventh Level" explained to him by his imaginary friend named Dante.

I do not know what to do in order to help him.

He is also extremely self conscious about his actions, does not know how to interact socially, and I am afraid that he could be a potential danger to himself as well as others.

This has led him to develop a prescription drug habit.

I've seen him take about two to three pills every two hours.

Of course he can afford it, no denying that. It seems as though he is proud of the fact that he cannot handle his problems and acts as if it is something normal. I am scared that one of these days his habit is going to lead him to try hallucinogenic drugs. Ever since we were college roommates he has spoken about experimenting with LSD, just for kicks.

He is a prime candidate to try it, especially with his depression. I'm sure he thinks it will change his life and get into the "Seventh Level". I just hope he is still in that stage where he can be saved. Hitting bottom can help with motivation, but only if you survive.....#*7\$///.....

He throws himself to the floor and begins to sob. The smell of urine permeates through his shorts as it mixes with his tears. He repeats the last line to himself "Hitting bottom can help, but only if you survive."

He looks at his hands, turns, and stands up.

The wall behind his desk has a large hole, as though in a fit of rage someone

had put their entire fist through it. The desk itself was raped by scattered papers, torn manila folders, a computer monitor with a shoe in it, and glass everywhere. It wasn't always like this. At one time, his office was the example of an efficient workspace. Now after this holocaust, it was a sad sight to see—with or without the urine.

He sits down at his desk, takes the pen and begins to write.

Dear Editor,

I am sick of it all. I have no time to waste and I want to get to the Seventh Level, the one Dante told me about, by morning. So here it goes.

The drugs I take haven't helped with the depression or OCD. Now, with that man dead, my habit will subside. His dealings were messing me up for good and I cannot afford to wreck my life because of some little man with pills and a password (which was Dam Doisy now that I think about it). I led him to the alleyway and bang-bang with the gun I stashed under my sock, but that's beside the point. The point is that a man in my position, would be disgraced if word ever got out about my little addiction.

My best friend Joepun says I need professional help, but I just don't see myself explaining my secret habit to some stranger. Although it could be soothing to confess this to someone I know very well...someone I trust. Maybe I should tell Joepun about it...@\$%^&

He looks at his watch and realizes it's been two hours since his dosage. The effect should be in full swing now, but for some reason he feels fine; no floating French fries, no walking dinosaurs in his office, none of the usual hallucinations people have described to him have occurred.

He gets up, walks toward his aquarium. He gazes at the fish for a second, but he catches sight of something out of the corner of his eye. It's the award plaque he received last year. Staring at it, he reads the name inscribed to himself:

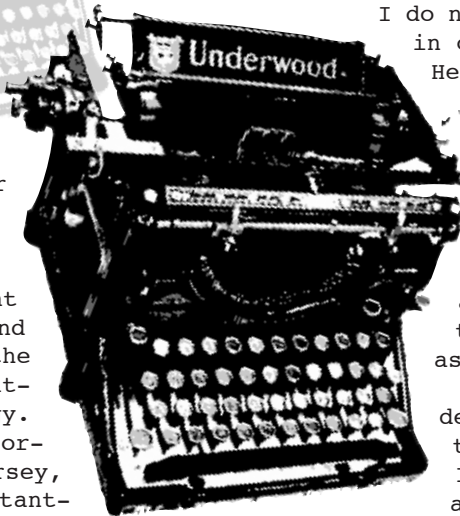
"Breslin Joepun, Editor of the Year"

He is sick to his stomach, and proceeds to vomit the chicken breast filet he had earlier. Angry, confused, and with a head full of acid, he sits down at his desk for the last time, grabs the pen and writes.

Dear Editor,

My name is Breslin Joepun and I am my own best friend...@\$%^&

He drops the pen again, looks out the window, and crashes through to the Seventh Level.



The Rutgers Review Guide to:



Couch-Surfing



Jake Slade

Flagstaff, Arizona

Current Mission: *"To change the World, one conversation at a time"*

Personal Description:

Hey! Come sleep on my couch. I love to talk. We can talk all night long. But I don't like to talk about myself – this is strange writing about myself, because I don't even know who I am. I also like to play tennis and wear colorful shirts. What you should know about me is that I'm interested in meeting new people. You should stay on my couch for at least a week so we can become friends. No drugs or pets allowed on this couch.

Couch available: Definitely!

Couchsurf requests replied to: 89%

Member since: October 3, 2007

Age: 24

Gender: Male

Membername: JAKESTER

Occupation: being an awesome person

Education: College, blah blah blah

Grew up in: Portland, OR, The U, S, of A

Ethnicity: Person of the World



Ashley Daul and David Rupar

Portland, Oregon

Current Mission: *"To Be Rick Steves"*

Personal Description:

We're just your average raw-vegan, enviro-friendly, art, music, book, and movie loving, trash-picking, plant-growing, meditating, Portlanders. If you stay with us, you should have an open mind, and be ready to try new things. We don't do drugs or drink, but daily 4 A.M. yoga is a must. We don't have a car, but we have many bicycles for you to ride. We hope to meet all kinds of people, especially people made out of candy.

Couch availability: Definitely!

Couchsurf requests replied to: 100%

Member since: January 10, 2008

Age: 22

Gender: several people

Membername: Ashley&David

Occupation: custodian and nursing assistant

Education: Life...a little college and coachsurfers

Grew up in: David-Milwaukee WI Ashley-Green Bay WI

Ethnicity: Irish/French/Yukoslovakian/German/Italian



Impress your couch hosts with these conversation starters:

There are only 4 words in common English that end in -dous: tremendous, horrendous, stupendous, hazardous.

The first product to have a barcode scanned was Wrigley's gum.

Barbie's full name is Barbie Millicent Roberts.

Cranberry Jell-O is the only kind that contains real fruit.

The plastic things on the end of shoelaces are called "aglets."

There was once a town in West Virginia called "6."

Tommy Beavitt

Ullapool, Scotland

Current Mission: *"to continually learn new languages and practice using them in conversation with the people that I meet; to sing the great songs of the great cultures and perform them on the streets and in the bars, venues (and couches!) of the world's great cities..."*

Personal Description:

I am on a spiritual quest of sorts, and would like to meet anyone who can tell me the meaning of life. If you don't know the meaning of life, that's ok, because neither do I. But you can still sleep on my couch, it's quite comfy. It would be great if you are multilingual, as I would LOVE to speak with you in any language, I'll do my best to understand.

Couch availability: Yes

Couchsurf requests replied to: 84%

Member since: September 5, 2006

Gender: Male

Membername: BEAVITT

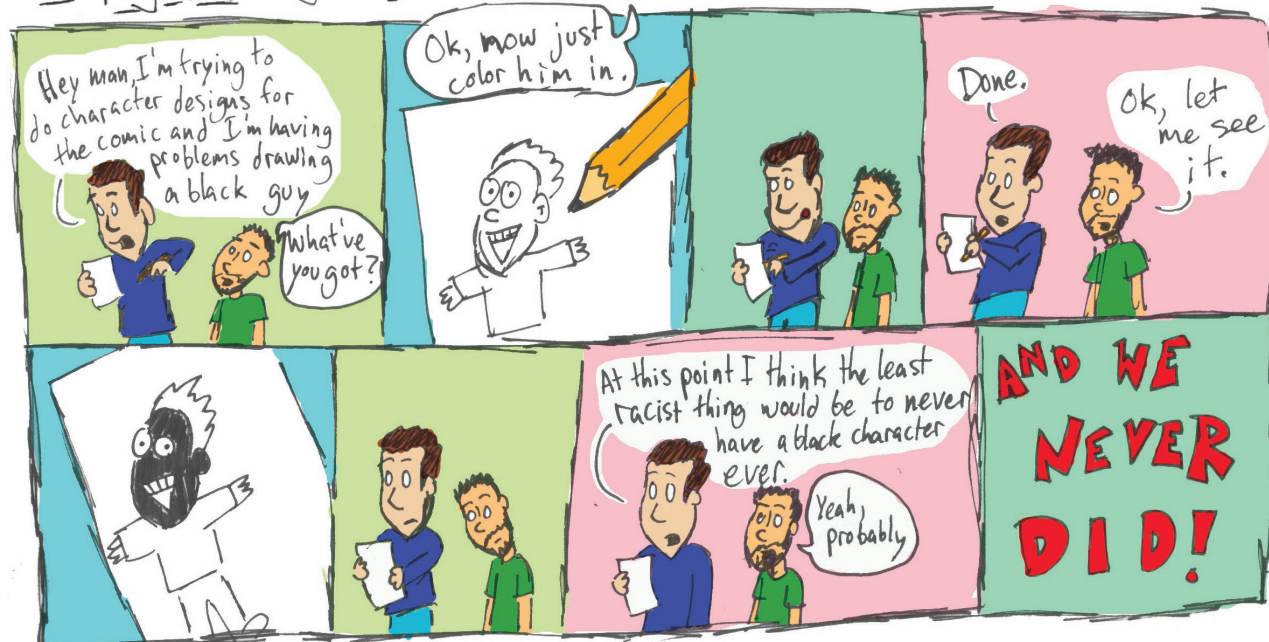
Occupation: Poet/musician/linguist/builder/landscape gardener

Education: I don't have a university degree. I have been educated by myself and some wise men and women in my life.

Grew up in: Ullapool, Highlands, Scotland

Ethnicity: Jewish

That Thing I Drew by Jon Bershad



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S**

WHERE YOU SHOULD BE

4/2 Pandora Scooter @ The First Reformed Church of Highland Park

4/4 Ra Ra Riot @ Webster Hall

4/5 Bishop Allen @ The Bowery Ballroom

4/6 Mates of State, Black Kids @ Webster Hall

4/7 Here We Go Magic @ Music Hall of Williamsburg

4/9 Someone Still Loves You Boris Yeltsin @ The Mercury Lounge

4/10 Beirut @ The Electric Factory (Philly)

4/13 The Faint, Telepathe @ The Trocadero (Philly)

4/15 The Tallest Man on Earth @ The Mercury Lounge

4/16 The Walkmen, Beach House @ Webster Hall

4/17 Great Lake Swimmers @ The Mercury Lounge

4/21 Ratatat @ Terminal 5

4/22 of Montreal @ The Trocadero

4/25 Ponytail @ The Music Hall of Williamsburg

4/29 Peter Bjorn and John, Chairlift @ Webster Hall

4/30 Bat For Lashes @ The Mercury Lounge

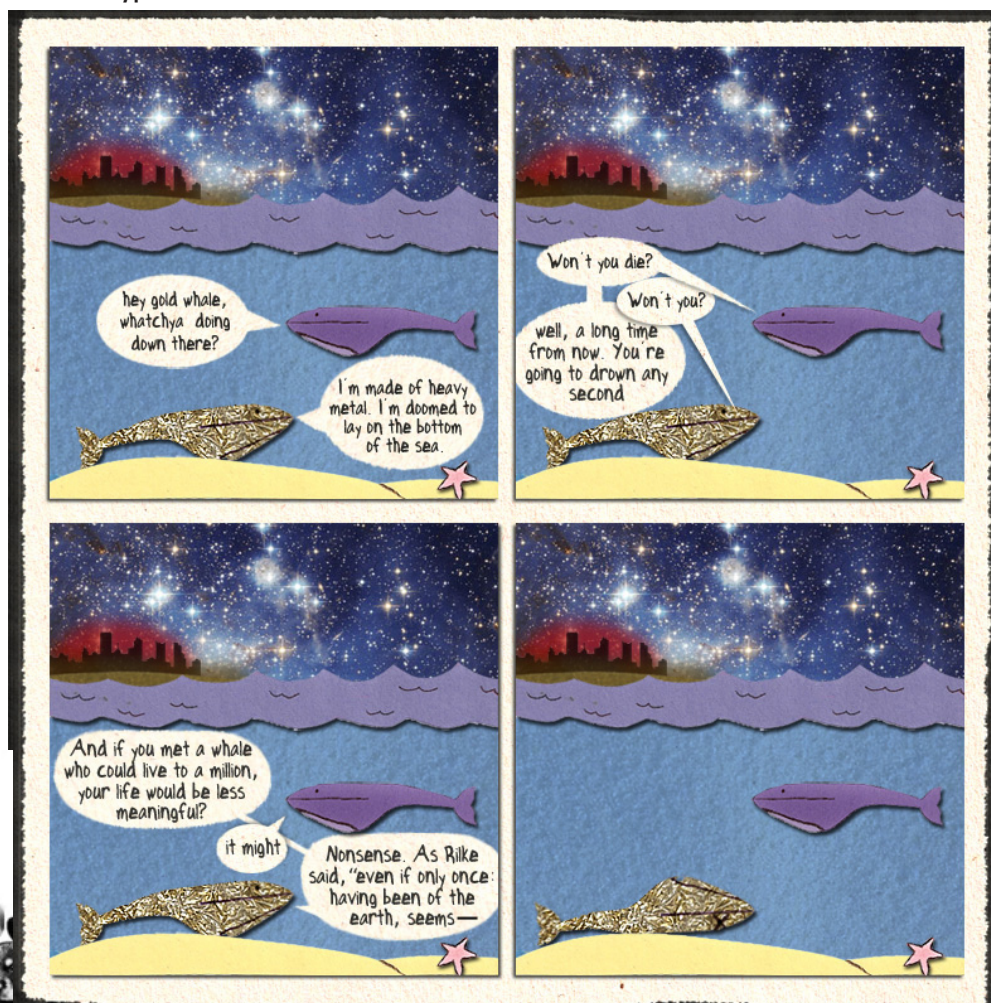
WTF?IDK!

Dave Rothstadt



Whaleacolypse

Matt Korostoff



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